GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:458
ANSWERED ON:28.02.2008
OIL EXPLORATION PROJECT IN PALK STRAIT
Gawali Smt. Bhavana Pundlikrao

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has asked the Government for relocation of the site of the oil exploration project in Palk Starit; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) & (b) No, Sir. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has not asked the Government for relocation of the site of the oil exploration project in Palk Strait as ONGC is not holding any acreage in Palk Strait. However, ONGC is holding two nomination blocks in Cauvery Shallow Offshore in Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar.
For the Block falling in the Gulf of Mannar, ONGC was denied environmental clearance on the ground that it is falling in CRZ-1, i.e, the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve. Part of the area is covered by Mannar Marine National Park.
ONGC had asked to swap the block with an alternate open acreage falling in Palk Bay. However, as there is no provision of swapping of area in nomination blocks, ONGC was not permitted to swap.